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THE

Commonweal

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by Michael Harrington

Barricades in the Background

by Hans Sahl

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THE
Commonweal
week by week

THE CHURCH-STATE PROBLEM

SEVERAL months ago Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, delivered an address in which he defended the thesis that a Catholic state has a duty to grant special privileges to the Church and to restrict the religious activities of non-Catholic groups. In the address he chided certain "liberal" Catholics, especially in the United States, who have questioned this view and advocated the ideal of a religiously "neutral" state. The Cardinal's remarks caused apprehension in many circles. The question was: How authoritative were they?

The New York *Times* apparently tried to find out, and in its July 23 edition carried a front page story with the head "Vatican Justifies Views of Prelates On Curbing Protestant Minorities." According to the *Times,* "The Vatican," in answer to inquiries, said that Cardinal Ottaviani's address was "not official or semi-official" but that it was, nevertheless, "unexceptionable."

This story seems to have caused even wider apprehension than the Cardinal's original address. A spokesman for "Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State" has cited it as official confirmation of his organization's worst fears. And as responsible a correspondent as Roscoe Drummond, of the *Christian Science Monitor,* has written that the *Times* story presents a "controlling" reason for never sending an American Ambassador to Vatican City. Mr. Drummond, however, welcomed the statement as possessing, if nothing else, the virtue of frankness.

"Having this Catholic policy so bluntly expounded," Mr. Drummond wrote, "—this policy of advocating religious freedom when the Roman Catholic Church is in a minority—as in America—and practicing religious discrimination when it has a near monopoly—as in Spain and Italy, for example—is welcome because it shows that the American principle of separation of church and state is a realistic, practicable, invaluable barrier to breaking down religious equality before the law."

The general effect of Cardinal Ottaviani's address, and of the *Times* assertion that "The Vatican" now "justifies" his view as "unexceptionable" has thus been profound. Such professional anti-Catholics as the members of POAU have seized on them as ammunition for their propaganda. Many other non-Catholics, men of good will anxious to believe in the good will of their Catholic neighbors, have been shocked by what seems to them a blunt avowal of Catholic intolerance, and some "liberal" Catholics have been, to say the least, embarrassed.

There seems to us no real reason for either the shock or the embarrassment. Nor is there any reason for the anti-Catholics to exult. No one has ever denied that the view expressed in Cardinal Ottaviani's address is the traditional Catholic view. No one, it would seem, could claim that it is a view inconsistent with an ideal "Catholic state," abstractly considered. No Catholic, certainly, could doubt its orthodoxy. For a Vatican spokesman, therefore, to have said that the Cardinal's view is "unexceptionable" was merely to have cited what should have been obvious.

THOSE Catholics who oppose the traditional position on the "Catholic state" do not take any "exception" to its orthodoxy. Their attempt to formulate a new position—one in closer harmony with the realities of modern civilization—is based, rather, on a truth enunciated by Pope Leo XIII:

"It is the special property of human institutions and laws," Leo wrote, "that there is nothing in them so holy and salutary but that custom may alter it, or time overthrow it, or social habits bring it to naught. So in the Church of God, in which changeableness of discipline is joined with absolute immutability of doctrine, it happens not rarely that things which were once apposite and suitable become in the course of time out of date, or useless, or even harmful."

The classic position on the "Catholic state," may once have been apposite and suitable to a sacral

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civilization, and it is, indeed, still orthodox and logical as a textbook position. But it seems to many, in Leo's words, out of date, and useless, and even harmful if applied in the twentieth century—and this whether it be applied in the United States or in Spain.

Cardinal Ottaviani himself recognized at least the possibility of this when, in his address, he admitted that the application of the "intransigent stand" he was enunciating in principle might have to be tempered by such social—as distinct from religious—concepts as the rights of man, even in an overwhelmingly Catholic state.

Since there seems no possibility of any "Catholic state" existing, either now or in the future, in which a rigid application of the abstract position enunciated by Cardinal Ottaviani would not be tragically unwise, discussion of this position must remain rather academic. Taken out of the academy, as in the *Times* story, it is a discussion which may do real harm by arousing fear and misunderstanding of the Church. The effort among Catholics to formulate a Church-State position which has some relevance to the world they live in should therefore continue.

PEACE IN KOREA

THE only cheers in Times Square armistice night were muted and self-conscious, prompted by the newsreel cameramen. The city streets were otherwise silent. Television stations ran quiz shows through the hour of signing. People did not go out, or call their neighbors; the Masses next day were no more crowded than usual.

In short, the war in Korea ended as emotionlessly as it has been fought for the past year. That does not mean that people are indifferent. They have simply learned to live with war, and they distrust this armistice. That is probably for the best, because we face a good many more years of inconclusive struggle, and there will be few occasions to cheer or parade.

We could have done two things in Korea: work for armistice and stalemate, as in fact we did; or carry full-scale war against China. To have done the latter would have meant a thorough mobilization of America and the sending of more troops to the Far East. It would have meant as sticky an involvement with the Chinese as Brer Rabbit with the Tar Baby. The people who wanted us to do this could have made a respectable case. They did not do so. They are the people who talked in deluded terms about paralyzing China through air power alone. They are the people who are now cutting our defense expenditures. The Korean armistice is simply a practical expression of the realities of power.

The problem of uniting Korea is unlikely to be solved for a long time. The best practical action we can take now to assure a democratic future for Korea is rehabilitation. From one to one and a half million Koreans have been killed. Seven hundred thousand homes were demolished. The economic and social situation is appalling. American and UN help to South Korea has thus far necessarily been limited for the most part to providing emergency food, shelter, and medical aid. Now a one and a half million dollar irrigation and land reclamation program has been undertaken by the ROK government and the UN. The United States is working out a four or five year plan for rehabilitation. Technical training is needed. Power projects are needed. Industry must be rebuilt, and fishing and farming put back on a sound basis. The South Korean people have suffered devastation with astounding, resilient, stubborn courage. Anyone who has spent time in Korea testifies to that. The people have been putting houses back together, scraping roads clear, sowing fields and paddies—but alone, they can do little.

The killing is over and the prisoners will return. We owe, first of all, thanks to these men, and to the men of our allies, for what they did in Korea. They proved that collective security is more than a slogan, and that honor lives. For that rea-

NEXT WEEK

JAMES N. VAUGHAN writes about *The Strange Case of Alger Hiss,* by the Earl Jowitt, recently published in this country.

"Professedly the purpose of this book is to raise important questions in the mind of the reader so that he—by mere thinking processes, be it understood—will be able to find answers and thereby fit himself to decide whether Hiss was really guilty of perjury. Yet Lord Jowitt states that he cannot decide these questions for himself with complete assurance. Despite this overt disclaimer of a final opinion by the author, I think no one reading his book, unaided by indepependent investigation of the facts, will fail to conclude that Lord Jowitt means to be understood as saying that there is a reasonable doubt of the guilt of Hiss. Hence, putting aside all circumlocution, this book aims to persuade its readers that the conviction of Hiss represents a miscarriage of American justice."

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son, this war may prove, in the eyes of history, to have been the most crucial event of the mid-century.

Our soldiers held not only the four hundred mile line in Korea, but the line around the world which divides the military power of Communism from the non-Communist world. It was a worthy cause. It was fought with bravery, surely, and with decency.

THE CHILDREN

MANY UN agencies have long titles and functions which, while worthwhile, are not easily explained. About the International Children's Emergency Fund, however, there is no such problem. The work of this agency is easily explained, easily understood. It feeds hungry children and treats sick children in underdeveloped areas all over the world.

In late years, the Children's Fund has been concentrating its major efforts in Asia, where the need is greatest. Major credit for starting the Fund belongs to the United States, and this nation has always been one of its chief supporters. So successful has the work been that the number of countries contributing to the Fund has grown steadily over the years, rising from thirty-one in 1950 to forty at the present day.

As such things go, the Children's Fund takes little money. For this year's contribution to UNICEF, Congress had authorized the sum of nine million, eight hundred thousand dollars. This may not be only a drop in the bucket, but how many atom bombs can one buy for less than ten million dollars? With the money contributed by the various nations, the administrators of the Children's Fund planned this year to help directly some twenty-five million children by establishing local health centers to fight tuberculosis, malaria and such preventable diseases, as well as by feeding and treating undernourished children.

Congress had authorized this amount as the U. S. contribution for the year. But Congress has still to appropriate funds to match its authorization. Now the House Appropriations Committee has cut the authorized sum back to five million dollars, a slash of almost fifty per cent, and has denied entirely the President's request for funds for next year.

Ironically enough, Russia is one of the nations which had previously refused to back UNICEF but which has now joined the effort. By making its first contribution this year, the Soviet may be able to reap the credit for a venture really inspired by the U. S., at a time when the hasty economizers in Congress have killed U. S. support.

Happily, the ill-advised action of the House Appropriations Committee on this matter is not final. The Senate will now have its chance to repair the damage that has been done. The money for the Children's Fund should be restored in full.

END OF THE ROAD

THERE is no doubt that considerable sentiment exists for Senator Bricker's proposed Constitutional amendment, which would drastically curb the powers of the Chief Executive. At a recent Republican gathering in Wisconsin, for example, Senator Wiley, senior Senator from the state, was roundly booed for supporting President Eisenhower and opposing Senator Bricker's proposal. In this matter, President Eisenhower has stuck to his general policy of compromise in dealing with Senator Bricker; instead of meeting him head-on in open conflict, the President has tried to find some kind of middle ground. But now he has gone as far as he can go in this direction.

In negotiating on this problem, Administration representatives went further in search of a compromise than many Eisenhower adherents found comfortable. But even so, there was no doing business with the right-wing Republicans who oppose the President's ideas on foreign policy, and in the end Senator Bricker flatly refused the proposed compromise.

Now the chances are that this controversial issue will come up again during the next session to plague the Administration. But even President Eisenhower, with his gift for placating those of opposite views, could go no further along the road of compromise than he did. If he went all the way with the views of some of the Republicans now in Congress, the President would still have a desk, chair and office, but little else.

POVERTY ABROAD

EUROPE cannot go ahead fast enough for some Americans. But often enough, citizens of this country fail to realize the practical difficulties under which European governments work. Many people were disappointed, for example, with the losses recently suffered by the De Gasperi government in Italy. Why, they wonder, cannot the government win public confidence faster?

Recent dispatches point up some of the problems faced by the Italian government and help to

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explain why middle-of-the-road parties there and elsewhere in Western Europe often find the going hard. A survey by Italian legislators disclosed some facts about that country's poverty which are shocking to an American. Eight years after the war, the committee found that two per cent of the population was living in cellars, garrets or warehouses. Ninety-two thousand families still live in shacks or caves. All in all, almost one-quarter of the population live in housing that is rated as subnormal.

The food picture is equally bad. More than seven per cent of the population never have meat, sugar or wine, and another eight per cent have these items infrequently. Almost twenty-five per cent were classed as having either an "extremely low" or "low" standard of living. This picture is especially true in Southern Italy, where conditions are the worst and where the left-wing parties scored their greatest gains in the recent voting.

These are typical of the problems faced by the De Gasperi government since the war, and, to some degree, by the moderate governments in other nations of Western Europe. Under the circumstances, to charge them with lack of effort is the height of futility.

The fortunes of the free world are inevitably tied up in the success or failure of the efforts of these governments to cope with such poverty, a fact the U. S. took practical note of in its various foreign aid programs. This is a time for thinking of ways and means to expand the productive power and real wealth of these countries, not for cutting back. And it is time for the U. S. to take the lead in working on ways and means to open to immigration those areas, in this country and elsewhere, which will benefit from development and which, in turn, will help to ease the pressure of population on still-inadequate economies in countries like Italy.

"NOW, INDOCHINA!"

WHEN the signing of the Korean armistice was announced to the clubs and crowds of Paris, cries were heard: "Now, Indochina!"

The French people are anxious to drop their burden in Asia. The Laniel budget and French popular sentiment are both opposed to an extension of the war. That is surely understandable. Year after year the French have fed their best regular troops and their wealth into the bottomless pit of Indochina; and today they are as frustrated, and in many ways as far from victory, as they were when the whole thing started.

The sad thing is that it has been such a parade of errors. It is second guessing to say so, but there is considerable evidence to indicate that generosity and patience at the end of the second World War could have united Indochina under non-Communist nationalist governments friendly to France. The French chose to try to re-establish the empire. They chose force and repression at a time when England was showing magnanimity and wisdom in India, and the United States was showing good intentions, accompanied by no great perspicacity, in China and, of course, in the Philippine Islands.

The French turned the nationalists against them. The Communists already had an influential part in the nationalist movement and in short order they took control of it and were running the anti-French war.

So now the French are at a well-advertised turning point. They want to quit, yet know that defeat in Indochina might well yank the keystone out of the arch of southeast Asia. The non-Communist Indochinese nationalists are carrying their dissatisfaction with France to the point of armed rebellion. The Communists are well-off militarily, and are presumably planning a new offensive for when the rains end.

What can the French do? A negotiated settlement now with the Communists is possible, surely, but would have very questionable results throughout south Asia. It would be interpreted as a French defeat, would mean a division of Indochina, and in all likelihood would lead in time to further trouble in the French-controlled areas.

The alternative is to grant the Associated States a promise of independence, such as that demanded by Cambodia, and with new American aid try to kindle a genuine spirit of independence and fraternal struggle in non-Communist Indochina. The new French commander, General Navarre, seems to have a workable strategy for putting the Communists on the defensive. (And he has already carried out two extremely successful commando actions.) His troops, with the backing of a nationalist movement in free Indochina, could put a new face on events there, and give the French and Indochinese an opportunity to negotiate with the Communists from a position of strength.

So much is a possibility; it is not a probability. What is more likely is a negotiated settlement, as soon as possible, on as good a set of terms as France can get from the Communists. Something might be redeemed from that (especially if it were part of a general Far Eastern *modus vivendi*, worked out at the Korean peace conference), but it would be an inauspicious ending to a bitter episode.

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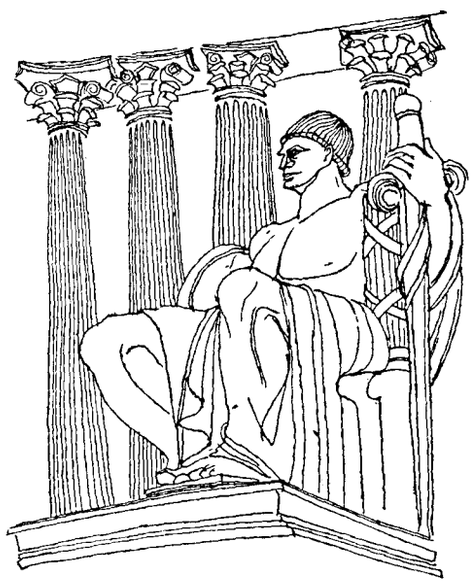
Rights of the Guilty

'IN COPING WITH THE COMMUNIST THREAT, WE HAVE PERHAPS ENDANGERED OUR SAFETY MORE THAN A SPY COULD EVER DO.'

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

IN our society, the measure of a free man's liberty are the rights of the guilty. Until the actual verdict, the innocent and the guilty are the same. The procedure for the conviction of a criminal is identically the safeguard and vindiction of the man who has done no wrong.

The conspirator constitutes a real threat to the security of this society. In the case of the Communist apparatus, it has been conclusively proved that the Party has been used as a center for espionage activity. But in coping with this situation, we have perhaps endangered our safety more than a spy could ever do—we have rent the basic fabric of our constitutional protection of the guilty.



This tragic direction of our law has been manifested in many ways. But there are two—the loose definition of the conspirator, and the tribunal before which he shall be accused—which are of critical importance. Together, they amount to a profound trend, for their extension is almost always justified on the basis that "the Conspirator has no rights."*

One of the earliest instances of the legal broadening of the notion of conspiracy emphasizes the initial point: that law is a generalization, applying equally to the innocent and guilty. The extension occurred in "progressive legislation"—the anti-trust laws. The traditional formulation that proof of conspiracy required acts directly linked to crime was abandoned. Little proof was required of action in concert. It was often implied circumstantially rather than demonstrated. Yet this attempt at curbing the excessive privilege of big business now strikes at the individual. No matter how well-intentioned the aim of legislation, it may be vitiated by invoking procedures which destroy more rights (perhaps in the future) than the law itself grants. In the anti-trust attack on the multi-billion dollar corporation was a principle dangerous to the single, and often defenseless, person.

But by far the most serious extension of this notion of conspiracy occurred in the Smith Act, which had the specific aim of curbing subversion. The Communist leaders who were convicted at Foley Square in New York City two years ago were not tried for conspiracy to overthrow the United States Government. They were not even tried for advocating such action. They were, as Justices Black and Douglas made plain in their dissents, tried for *conspiring to advocate at some future date* the violent overthrow of the United States government.

The conspiracy was no longer a case of acting in order to act criminally, the traditional doctrine. It was not even a case of advocating in a situation so explosive that a democracy must limit the right of free speech. Not the overt deed, nor the overt word, but the secret word which could in the future be the cause of other words which might be dangerous.

Is it a *reductio ad absurdum* to say that the Smith Act potentially incriminates the liberal and the reactionary, the Catholic and the atheist? Consider how it was actually used for the first time. The Smith Act was not then invoked against Communists. It was used against the leadership of a small, Trotskyite group, the Socialist Workers Party, which also happened to be the leadership of the Teamsters Union in Minneapolis.

The Socialist Workers Party had not constituted any

*Thus Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, speaking to the graduating class of the F.B.I. academy earlier this year, said: "A man has certain rights as a citizen of this great Republic of ours. But these rights are inseparable from duties. We have noticed that many before Congressional committees separate rights from duties. They say, 'I stand on my Constitutional rights.' If they do not recognize their Constitutional duties, they surrender their Constitutional rights. [underline added]. How can a man claim the privileges of this great Constitution and this great democracy of ours without recognizing that he has certain moral obligations to it?" Bishop Sheen's statement was quoted approvingly by David Lawrence in his syndicated column for July 8, 1953.

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kind of real threat to the United States Government. Why then was its leadership prosecuted? In all probability as the payment of a political debt by Franklin Roosevelt to Dan Tobin of the Teamsters, whose only means of removing the defiant Minneapolis union officers was by jailing them. It is significant that the Communist Party did not regard this trial, in 1941, as a breach of civil rights: ten years later, the Communist leadership was convicted by the statute which they once upheld—for use against Trotskyites only, of course.

This broadening of the definition of conspiracy is fraught with danger. Many have seen this. But there is another consequence which must be seen clearly as well. The broad definition of the conspirator has been introduced into a process where it is being progressively used by non-judicial bodies, by government administrative agencies and by groups of private citizens. Stripped of those few procedural safeguards that do remain in the court, the doctrine of conspiracy comes dangerously near to being all-inclusive, to incriminating anyone.

THE growing complexity of government in the last twenty years has meant an increase in the decisions reached in administrative hearings. These hearings are without judicial safeguards, yet they often have judicial consequences. Within this context, the new definition of the conspirator was bound to create havoc. And it has.

According to the Attorney General's list (which has been retained in the new Eisenhower loyalty order), a subversive group is one so defined by the Department of Justice. No one knows how the administrative decision to place an organization on the list is reached, because no one has been to a hearing (there have been none). No one knows who the accusers are because they have never been heard publicly. When sixty-two new groups were added to the list by Attorney General Brownell, the possibility of hearings were raised. What their nature will be—and whether they will extend to those groups who have been listed without hearings for years—is not yet clear.

Yet, as a result of belonging to a listed group, a person will probably have difficulty in certain types of private employment and in all government work. He may now lose his right to government housing.

In the loyalty and security program, the same Kafkaesque procedures are used along with the loose definition of the conspirator. A typical list of specifications may well state, " . . . was, in 1934, a member, or sympathetic associate of, the Communist Party." It is also possible to withhold some of the accusations on the basis of which decision is made.

This tendency toward secrecy in taking action which may well destroy a man's career or even his right to work has been reinforced by two recent Supreme Court decisions. In the case of Ignatz Mezei, an alien was ordered held on Ellis Island though he was never told of the evidence which led to the deportation order. In the Nugent case, the Supreme Court ruled that a conscientious objector who had been denied his requested classification on the basis of secret FBI reports could be sent to jail for failure to report for induction. Justice Douglas (who with Justice Black dissented in both cases and was joined by Frankfurter in the Nugent case) wrote that such techniques had "an infamous history . . . [and] should be rooted out of our procedure."

In all of these cases, it is quite possible that the files against an individual are filled with hearsay or the hatred of his enemies. Yet there is no opportunity for the accused to even learn what is being charged against him.

The Attorney General's list, Loyalty and Security Program (now extended to every last person in government), Immigration and Selective Service—in all of these the loose definition of the conspirator and subversive is used before a tribunal which does not guarantee judicial safeguards. It is here, in the area of administrative decision, that one of the most dangerous tendencies of the anti-subversive program has emerged. It is not extremist to say that much of the Star Chamber procedure has been ratified.

But there is yet another area where the forum before which the conspirator is arraigned is even less competent—that of the public. The broadened criteria of subversion, when used by private pressure groups in a nation of mass communications, can pass popular bills of attainder, depriving the innocent and guilty alike of their basic rights. If the criteria of conspiracy have been diffuse in the juridical proceeding of the court and secret in the quasi-judicial hearing of the administrative body, they have become ubiquitous in the workings of the pressure group.

Thus, it is now generally agreed (with the exception of one section of the civil libertarians) that "membership" in the Communist Party renders a man unfit for teaching, or acting, or perhaps for employment as a department store clerk. If a man is a member of the Party, he is a conspirator.

But "membership" in the Party is not a simple thing to determine. After two exhaustive trials, all that the government could legally prove against William Remington was that he had perjured himself when he said that he didn't know that there was a Young Communist League at Dartmouth in the thirties, and that he had attended one meeting of the Party. It was impossible to prove that he had been a "member."

Given this difficulty in a courtroom, who is to decide that a man is a "member" of the Communist Party and thus a conspirator unfit to teach or act or earn his reg-

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ular living? Unfortunately it is those who are not competent to decide the question—the faculty, the radio audience, the employer. Without the resources of investigation and the rules for the evaluation of evidence, these decide the delicate question.

In effect, this has meant something quite different from actually establishing membership. What most often happens is that a man is discharged for standing on his constitutional rights against self-incrimination under the Fifth Amendment. Thus, Edwin Berry Burgum of New York University was suspended, by telegram, immediately after he invoked the Fifth Amendment. Professor Burgum had never made any secret of his Marxism, which had been public knowledge for years. But he was fired because he invoked his constitutional rights.

BY and large, the public, and some of the faculties have decided that a refusal to testify under the Fifth Amendment constitutes an admission of guilt. Yet it was obviously not the intention of the framers of the Constitution to make one of its privileges equal to admission of guilt. A man does not necessarily refuse because this particular question implicates him in this particular crime, but because it might be a link in the chain of evidence leading toward his prosecution for an entirely different matter. Suffice it to say that the fear of being deemed to have "waived" his right if he answers at all, or the fear of being carefully checked for his remembrance of things twenty or thirty years in the past, could keep a man from testifying.

However, the Fifth Amendment is not the issue here. The point is that when a group which does not have the competence to make a judicial determination and attempts it anyway, that it will probably invoke absurd procedures, that no one is safe. And this is all part of the profound process which is not only taking place in our courts but in our administrative bodies as well.

In the fear and hysteria of the fight against subversion, the loose definition, the secret hearing, the judgment of the non-competent group, are becoming the rule, not the exception. Before this onslaught, the basic maxim—that the rights of the innocent and guilty are the same as to procedure and trial—is being destroyed. Rather than the "membership" criterion, the old test of overt acts, of distortions, suppression of evidence, etc., should be employed to ferret out genuine subversives. These criteria indicate incompetence for the job and are certainly more easily ascertainable than proving Party membership.

What are the rights of a conspirator? What are the rights of a man who seeks to spy, to steal, to kill, to aid in the preparation of a third World War, to betray his country? They are those of the innocent man, no more—and no less. What are the rights of the innocent man? The same as those of the conspirator, no less—and no more.

CATHOLICISM IN AMERICA VIII

Catholics and Education

JOSEPH E. CUNNEEN

IS it possible at this time even to begin a serious examination of the interaction between Catholicism and American education? If the widespread response to the brand of criticism associated with the name of Paul Blanshard continues to make us Catholics feel that we are the victims of a new wave of bigotry, we may be missing an opportunity for profitable examination of conscience in regard to both parochial and public education. When we hear naively doctrinaire enthusiasts of the public schools make implicitly totalitarian statements on education, or on the desirability of compulsory attendance at such schools, or on starving private schools into submission, what is our answer to be?

Must our response intensify those tendencies which encourage an isolationist American Catholicism? Are we to take an unhealthy secret pleasure in these attacks, since they confirm us in our assurance that we alone have been right all the time, and that it is only from the Church that one can rely on a really determined fight for sound principles or moral standards in the education of American youth? Is the situation to be an excuse for a counterattack on the public schools, with the usual Catholic barrage against John Dewey, and progressive education?

The level of our reply is important, for although it is hard to see why Mr. Blanshard himself should be considered more intellectually respectable than earlier Know-Nothings, many of those who have somehow found in him a distorted echo of their own fears about

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Catholicism are asking very real questions, and are motivated by praiseworthy religious, ethical, and democratic ideals. It might be helpful if we tried to understand why men who should not be truly considered anti-Catholic are fearful of what they consider generally held Catholic attitudes in education. The sincerity and seriousness of their concern recall the accurate observation of Cardinal Gibbons (made in a letter to Pope Leo XIII, Dec. 30, 1890), that divisions between American Catholics and their fellow citizens:

> are caused above all by the opposition against the system of national education which is attributed to us, and which, more than any other thing, creates and maintains in the minds of the American people the conviction that the Catholic Church is opposed by principle to the institutions of the country and that a sincere Catholic cannot be a loyal citizen of the United States.

MANY Catholics themselves have long been dissatisfied with certain aspects of Catholic education as it now exists. However, if, like this writer, they are loyal graduates of Catholic grammar school, high school, college and graduate school, they are naturally reluctant to make their discontent public, especially at a time when parochial schools seem to be under fire. But in some respects the greatest harm done to Catholicism by its bigoted critics could be to slow up the necessary and barely-begun process of self-criticism in all areas of Catholic life. Serious Catholic examination of our own schools tends to be divided between realistic appraisal of the need to continue raising standards at all levels, and the discouraged recogntion that our graduates, although steady church-goers, often have a passive, formalistic, and moralistic conception of their membership in the Church. It is generally recognized that the lack of funds is not the only problem.

When one considers the paternalistic priest-layman relationship which naturally developed among poor and leaderless groups, and the necessity of insuring a rough-and-ready survival before even the most elementary educational problems could be tackled, no apologies are needed in any comparison between parochial and public schools. The really surprising thing is not that teaching nuns have fewer semester hours of credit in "Methods of Education" than their public-school counterparts, but that this unique and immense system of Catholic institutions, from primary to graduate school, was instituted in so short a time by an immigrant population at the bottom of the American economic ladder. Anyone making generalized assumptions about the inferior quality of Catholic schools in America should be asked to present reasonable evidence and criteria. We Catholics of the younger generation especially should not underrate the accomplishment of our fathers in building the school system. If today the academic standards of earlier years seem to us to be inadequate—if we find a textbook still explaining literature in essentially philistine terms, or an aged religion teacher stubbornly repeating that the world is 5853 years old—it might be chastening to ask ourselves if we have as instinctive a Christian sense as our fathers in the face of such things as birth and death, poverty, work and respectability, sin and the love of God.

RESPONSIBLE Catholic critics who are working for higher standards feel that both training in the techniques of learning, as well as disinterested top-level scholarship suffer from the understandable but misguided desire to have the educational content itself provide the direct motives for piety. There is sometimes an insufficient awareness of what an ambiguous thing it is to teach the love of God. Such teaching is made even more precarious when in a particular sociological and psychological context the wrong answer can mean expulsion from the group. Although the disposition to exaggerate the value of Catholic novels or the reliability of Catholic historians is happily decreasing, signs of an excessive and sometimes aggressive sense of our minority status are still much too prevalent.

Some Catholic parents and even school administrators betray by their attitudes that they are essentially indifferent to the positive value of general education. Compulsory attendance laws and the job market force them to cooperate with it—for the sake of the additional religious training it makes possible. That secular knowledge is to be prized for its own sake, and is necessary to the Christian who is to consecrate himself to the work of civilization: these often seem only empty phrases.

Sometimes there is serious disagreement between those who are emphasizing the necessity of higher educational standards and those convinced that our schools are not Catholic enough. The latter feel, for example, that there are too many Catholic teachers of economics who would be flattered to be told that their courses—with the exception of a prayer before and after class—are identical with those offered at the Harvard School of Business Administration. They are right in pointing out that the class in religion at present is often only an extra chore for students of a Catholic grammar school, or that a scientific course in theology is not at present the central discipline of any existing Catholic university; that Catholic schools have sometimes paid too high a price for quick accreditation. The burden of our school system hardly seems worth carrying when one recognizes that the majority of our graduates know little about Catholic social thought, mental prayer, or intelligent participation in the official worship of the Church. However, those pleading for what they consider more

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distinctively Catholic institutions often betray a desire to turn the existing schools into training centers for "Catholic Action."

When the quality of our graduates is criticized, however, it soon becomes clear that the inadequacy of our schools is both part cause and part reflection of the level of American Catholicism in general. The process of religious erosion is going on, not only in some mechanistically-oriented public school classes in biology; it is present in even more frightening form in the collective yawn at the Mass attended—there are penalties for absence—by the entire student body of a Catholic school. In America today no wall, no complete system of Catholic Scout groups, CYO teams, sodalities or clubs can keep out the evil with which we are concerned. It is already in the Chancery offices, in our concern for bigness, in our various compromises with racism, in our exaggerated respect for money, and in our eagerness for success.

It seems fairly evident that those who are working quietly for higher educational standards have produced more durable and positive results—whether by avoiding anti-Protestant polemics and pious euphemisms in explaining the background of the Reformation, or by carrying on further experimentations in judicious borrowing from "progressive education," along the lines of the elementary school textbooks sponsored by the Commission on American Citizenship at the Catholic University of America. Their work would be easier if the desire to expand the Catholic school system did not often operate automatically.

ON the parish level, unless the people are very poor or very thinly spread out over a large area, the absence of a school is often taken to mean that the pastor is either lazy or a poor organizer. The planning and responsibility for opening a new parochial school might well utilize a competent board of professional educators. Such a board could advise a pastor—in the long run sparing both him and his parishioners many unhappy scenes—that just any building with nuns teaching in it is not necessarily preferable to the existing schools in the area; that it is a betrayal of the Church's legitimate concern for education to let her insistence be portrayed to the world as one that accepts inferior facilities and lower academic standards in her desire that children be grounded in the catechism. If a new school is under consideration, the question regarding the ability to pay for it ought to be put in terms which assume that the Catholic demand is for the best.

The unhappy effects of ignoring this rough wisdom are perhaps most apparent in higher education, where the fear of Catholic attendance at a state university sometimes causes a religious order to blind itself to the practical requirements of a college or university plant. That institution whose faculty is inadequately staffed (or inadequately paid), whose libraries and laboratories cannot fulfil the needs which the courses described in the catalogue demand, ought to have its very reason for existence questioned, and ought not to be able to hide behind those "sound Catholic principles" which it believes itself to be imparting.

The profesional lay board of which we are in need would in one case tell the head of a religious order that he has neither the funds nor the qualified personnel to run a proposed new school, that the order ought not start another Catholic college simply because none exists in a particular area. On the other hand, the board might be equally insistent about other needs—the immediate desirability, for instance, of additional bi-lingual parochial grammar and high schools for the growing Puerto Rican population in New York. Although the parishes in which they are most numerous could not absorb the cost of these schools, there is no reason why the cost could not be borne by a diocesan, or if necessary, a national fund.

It is extremely unfortunate that we Catholic parents have, in the main, been encouraged to be passive—paying, but non-voting—members in a school system which is usually justified as a defense of our rights. We are grateful for the sacrifices of the teaching sisters, and try to support our schools generously, but we have a curiously ambiguous attitude towards them. We constantly complain about "money sermons" and "building pastors," and rarely think of the schools as our own. Though we are prepared to protest an alleged instance of bigotry on the part of a public-school teacher, we are far too little disposed to ask questions if one of our children comes back from a parochial school class ready to accuse his non-Catholic playmates of all kinds of "mortal sins."

Although the necessity of the parochial system is never openly challenged, and is even proclaimed as the Catholic norm in all times and places, misleading and ominous references to "the pain of mortal sin" are ap-

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parently necessary to keep many of us from choosing the public school or secular college for our children, even where Catholics institutions already exist. There would be a different attitude both within and without if attendance at Catholic schools had less of a compulsory character about it, and if the effective control over at least the majority of them—with due regard for the authority of the bishop—were in the hands of qualified laymen, the educational deputies of responsible and articulate parents. There would also be a different attitude in the parish if we learned to make our financial contribution to the school not as the obligatory and semi-grudging discharge of an additional tax imposed by outside authorities, but as the responsible contribution towards the realization of unique requirements in education, over which control is exercised through an elected parish school board.

THE middle-class suburb in which my family and I live may not be typical, but it affords a study of some of the problems in community relations involved in Catholic attitudes towards education. The Catholic population here was formerly quite small, but has recently grown to about forty per cent. The building fund for the new Church is well under way, and the pastor has made it clear that he considers this merely the first step in a fund-raising drive which will produce a school and convent.

The public school seems to have and to deserve the general confidence of the community. Although some Catholic parents are exercising their rights by sending their children to Catholic schools, those who have children in the public school have no major complaint against it.

In such a relatively stable community it should not be impossible to get parents' positive cooperation in a program of religious education for the children, and even to use some of the undoubted good-will that now exists to help Catholic parents bring up their children in the faith. The energy now expended by the Holy Name Society in disposing of chance books for the raffle of a $3,000 Buick is certainly greater than that needed to train them to be the nucleus in a parish dialogue or sung Mass. Various other ways could be found to make the common worship of the parish a potent method for the best kind of "modern" learning-by-doing. No effort in this direction has been made. On the contrary.

And although all sides piously proclaim that the school is above politics, in a small town so much of the annual budget is involved in the school that an election of a school-board or a vote on the school budget can create rather ugly political divisions. In our town there has been a conspicuous alliance between Catholics prominent in parish organizations and groups such as the Taxpayers' Association, whose thinking emphasizes concern for the tax-rate and property values. The common enemy of this alliance? The public school. In election after election, although most of their children are now attending the school, these Catholics have been active in seeking to defeat the appropriation of funds for a school library, for additional classrooms, or in seeking to elect to the school board those who would reflect their views. Inevitably, ill feeling has been stirred up. Although the word "divisive" is rightly considered a special contribution to jargon by professional anti-Catholics, the Catholic response to the problem of education in our town gives it some meaning.

At a parish Holy Name meeting which I attended there was a constant insistence that the bricks and mortar necessary for a Catholic building would cost less than those for a public school. There was the fallacious assumption that if one third of the students in the public school were transferred to a parochial one, the school tax could be cut proportionately. The general disposition seemed to be to think of the Catholic school problem as if it existed in a vacuum. There was little awareness that no estimate for financing the Catholic school could be realistic if it did not allow for the inevitable increase in the over-all school population, both public and parochial, in the years just ahead.

No one asked if the creation of a parochial school in a town of our size might seriously injure the public school, and if so, how that might affect our Christian moral obligations. There was nothing said to indicate that religious education was needed by others than children. One man declared he would do all he could to see his daughter through Catholic grammar and high school; after that, if she did not turn out well, he would feel that at least he had done his duty.

The climax of hypocritical unctuousness was reached when a successful young Catholic contractor made an emotional pledge of support for the future parochial school, saying, "I don't mind giving it [money] to you, Father, but I'll be damned if I give another cent to that damned Truman administration!" There is no reason to believe that his attitude has been substantially altered by the change in Washington. What did he mean? I think he meant nothing less than that his understanding of Catholicism impels him to serve the common good only under duress, grudgingly, since it is a "secular" thing. But he is willing to close his eyes if it can be guaranteed to him that he is serving a Catholic organizational apparatus, which for him apparently has no obligation to the community at large. Under such circumstances, as a matter of conscience, I would have to vote against this type of Catholic candidate for the local school board.

MANY who are not unfriendly critics of Catholicism would shake their heads on hearing the

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above account, and say, "Yes, that's the way it is." But such observers rarely have a hearing among us Catholics, who prefer to believe that only the godless, the invincibly ignorant, or the Protestant in the last stage of religious dilution can have any real fear of the still-growing Catholic school system. Knowing of the precarious existence of our own schools, we find it hard to realize that public schools themselves need a helping hand these days. The fact is that in many cases the additional parochial school is a threat to the public school, in terms of both economic and moral support. Sometimes this threat is exaggerated, but it is made credible by what looks like Catholic cooperation with groups which, sometimes unintentionally, have served to undermine confidence in public schools from Pasadena to Scarsdale.

We are too fond of saying what a saving our schools are to the American taxpayer. It is undoubtedly true that in a crowded city whose educational facilities are already strained, pupils can be educated more cheaply in a parochial school than in a public school, thanks to the nuns' vow of poverty. Even here the "gift" to the city is not as absolute as we often represent it; the hidden economics involved in paying for the parochial school affects the entire community. There is only so much money available for education within a given area; money withdrawn for Catholic schools is being taken out of a potentially common fund. Some economy-minded Catholic members of large-city Boards of Education make non-Catholics understandably skeptical about our boast of a gift to the taxpayer. Furthermore, in small towns, the addition of a Catholic school may mean a duplication of facilities that in fact is uneconomical.

We are legitimately impatient with those philosophical monists whose fear of any cooperation between religion and education hides their desire to level all educational goals in terms of their own drably uniform conception of the ideal citizen. But are we not sometimes unaware of the semantic confusion current in the term "cultural pluralism"? If cultural pluralism is an un-American bugaboo in the sense that all doctrinal and ideological differences must be ironed out before genuine assimilation can be achieved, then Catholicism too is un-American. The editors of such a journal as the *Christian Century,* however, who cannot be considered indifferent to the problem of religious education, have something else in mind when they warn against pluralism.

They are asking whether the common good is not imperilled if distinct and total social groupings are solidified in early and formative years, and if there is a tendency to carry over such groupings unduly even in later years, cutting straight through the social structure. The word "total" is important here. It is a positive value to be given a sense of one's personal religious heritage at specifically religious ceremonies and by doctrinal instruction—in so far as such things are divisive, it is a reflection of real divisions which cannot be obscured. But it is quite a different thing always to play baseball or go camping or hear the abstract command to love your neighbor with no friends other than those of one's own religious faith present. How will the group experience of the students of a parochial school eventually merge with the community? Would it not be more logical for a Catholic child, reared in specifically Catholic institutions from parochial to graduate school, to be drafted into segregated "Catholic" divisions of the army, or serve on a "Catholic" warship or air wing?

IT is not enough to say that Catholic schools teach love of one's neighbor and give the deepest moral and emotional sanction for this injunction. It is no answer to say that Catholic teachers—lay and religious —are individually and collectively patriotic. The fears of Catholic pluralism would not exist unless many of our graduates had been observed suffering from the ill-effects of this total sociological conditioning.

American interest in theory is not high, and public awareness of intra-Catholic discussion on the problem of Church and State—Ryan-Boland vs. Maritain-Murray—is almost negligible. Fortunately, most of our non-Catholic neighbors know little about the thesis of the "Catholic state." They are all too aware, however, of Catholic-bloc mentalities which imply acceptance of this thesis in areas of "special interest:" Catholic attempts to control the public school board, confused Catholic efforts to translate absolute standards of objective morality into specific, of necessity partially relativistic, legislation, etc. Some of our non-Catholic neighbors who are better educated in history cannot help being aware, too, that clerical control of education in many European countries was a prize in a search for power, fought out with disastrous educational and national consequences which are still evident, and in which responsibility cannot be limited to the "anti-religious forces." They are right to wish to avoid such a struggle here in America.

It is hard to sum up any over-all non-Catholic reaction to the quality of the education our schools have achieved. The constant suspicion is that they substitute indoctrination for education. Many competent teachers in higher education who have found Catholic students in their class whose previous formation had been exclusively in Catholic institutions, might have much to tell us of our failure to give these students genuinely inquiring minds, sure in their faith and free of the odor of stale apologetical manuals.

(This is the first installment of a two-part article which will be concluded next week.)

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THE SCREEN

"SQUARE CUT OR PEAR SHAPE"

THOSE who nostalgically look back on Anita Loos' book, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes,* as a summary of the vagaries of the twenties, are going to be annoyed that the producers of the new film version saw fit to modernize it. However, moviegoers to whom flappers and John Held Jr. drawings hold no more interest than the mementoes of any dear, dead decade, and who like a musical film that is big, brassy and boisterously beautiful will find that the new "Gentlemen" fits the bill.

As produced by Sol C. Siegel in stunning Technicolor and directed by Howard Hawks, "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" beats around no bushes in telling the story of two girls who are, albeit for different reasons, overly fond of men. The dim-witted gold-digger, Lorelei Lee, is mainly interested in a man's bank book. "A girl like I must look out for her future: a kiss on the hand may be very nice, but a diamond tiara lasts forever." Whereas Dorothy, Lorelei's bright, wise-cracking girl friend, is characterized by Lorelei as being so dumb she'd fall for a good-looking man.

Perfectly cast in the two lead roles are Marilyn Monroe, whose build and empty, pretty face are the very personification of the 1953 Lorelei, and Jane Russell, whose build and gleam-in-the-eye are just right as the 1953 Dorothy who knows where she's going. Both of the girls have ample opportunity to show what they can do in song-and-dance; and each gives her all in a production number particularly suited to the character she is playing. Blond-blonde Marilyn sings "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend," one of the songs salvaged from the 1949 musical comedy from which this movie vaguely stems. Miss Monroe knows exactly what she is doing as she clutches her bosom and naively warbles in her thin voice: "Square cut or pear shape, these rocks don't lose their shape." Miss Russell later does a burlesque of Marilyn and carries everything a little farther, but her best number, with a team of Olympic athletes, was specially written for the movie by Hoagy Carmichael and Harold Adamson.

Although its flashy script is dramatically weak, and Howard Hawks' direction has not helped it much, the movie manages to seem very lively. Hawks' greatest success is in making his two leading ladies seem to act, and fill the picture with a rowdy *joi de vivre*.

IF you look closely at the plot of "Let's Do It Again" you'll see touches of "The Awful Truth," a comedy in which Irene Dunne and Cary Grant were very amusing back in 1937. Jane Wyman and Ray Milland also have their amusing moments in this new version. Unfortunately the new script by Mary Loos and Richard Sale strains so hard to be cute and naughty that the result is more like an old-fashioned bedroom farce than a modern movie. Jane, as an ex-singer, and Ray, as a song writer, play a bickering wife and husband. Jane is not in love with Tom Helmore, whom Ray suspects; and Ray is not in love, as Jane thinks, with Valerie Bettis (a dancer of anthropological rituals which separate the men from the boys), but Jane *does* become interested in Aldo Ray (an Alaskan millionaire who's in uranium, but doesn't glow in the dark). Some of this nonsense is fun; most of it is vulgar; and none of it seems worth the handsome production and the efforts of this good cast. Let's not do "Let's Do It Again" again.

ALTHOUGH "Ride, Vaquero!" has some interesting ideas in its script and tries to follow in the footsteps of "High Noon" and "Shane," it stumbles over its own boot straps. Director John Farrow got so engrossed in his villain this time that his other characters become almost colorless. Anthony Quinn plays the role of a Mexican desperado; he and his lawless gang, which includes his mysterious brother-by-adoption (Robert Taylor), are determined to keep settlers out of southwest Texas even if they have to kill every one and burn every ranch.

The story in "Ride, Vaquero!" is supposed to be about one rancher (Howard Keel) and his wife (Ava Gardner) who intend to settle in this territory and build a cattle empire. What happens to this dream when Keel and Quinn tangle and when Ava and Robert tangle makes only so-so movie fare with a lot of rough stuff and shooting and pretentious writing substituting for the real thing.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

MR. LUDLOW REPLIES

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: John Cort drags me, by the hair of the head as it were, into his article in The Commonweal for July 3. He seems to stand perpetually willing to convict me of heresy, so perhaps you will allow me to state briefly my position on the wage contract, which Mr. Cort feels contradicts the papal stand.

It is one thing to state, as did the Popes, that there is nothing necessarily unjust in the wage contract; it is another thing to conclude from this that therefore the wage contract, as it actually works out in the concrete,

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is desirable. Or that therefore one cannot, as a Catholic, advocate a better system. As I understand it, the Popes' position is negative. It states there is no intrinsic immorality in the wage contract, without thereby closing the door to other systems such as that accepted by anarcho-syndicalists. To hold the contrary would indeed be to condemn cooperatives—which, I am sure, Mr. Cort would not do.

I wish also to take exception to a statement by William Pfaff in The Commonweal [July 26] that "Conscientious objectors find their society permits them to drink beer while the less conscientious die violently, and their logic is bloodied." This is, I fear, a generalization extended to all conscientious objectors (of whom there are thousands) from Mr. Pfaff's personal acquaintance with a few who apparently scandalize him. It is however the type of statement which, if used of other minority groups, would, I am sure, call forth a protest from Mr. Pfaff.

ROBERT LUDLOW.

I plead not guilty to the charge of standing "perpetually willing to convict [Mr. Ludlow] of heresy."

I plead guilty to the charge of believing that Mr. Ludlow's position on the wage contract, as stated in past issues of The Catholic Worker, *does contradict the encyclicals.*

The Popes' position is not exactly negative. Quadragesimo Anno *says this*:

"First of all, those who declare that a contract of hiring and being hired is unjust of its own nature, and hence a partnership contract must take its place, are certainly in error and gravely misrepresent Our Predecessor [Leo XIII] whose Encyclical not only accepts working for wages or salaries but deals at some length with its regulation in accordance with the rules of justice."

Unfortunately, I don't have a file of Catholic Workers *handy. But I recall a piece Mr. Ludlow wrote in which he extolled the program of the Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World), the American version of anarcho-syndicalism.*

The IWW program, as contained in the preamble of their constitution, or whatever they call it, contains a condemnation of the wage contract as unjust of its own nature.

Mr. Ludlow's statement above, however, is moderate and reasonable and I have no wish to quarrel with it except to point this out: cooperatives are almost always operated on a modification of the wage contract, not elimination of it. So are most profit-sharing or stock-sharing plans. That is, the workers get wages and then profits or stock in addition. Mr. Ludlow has often written in the past as though any form of wage contract, whether just or unjust of its nature, was bad, period. That was my quarrel. If there is no more quarrel, fine. Let's shake hands. JOHN C. CORT.

Mr. Ludlow is not the only person who found a meaning in my remark about conscientious objectors which was not intended. Let me make myself clear. I feel that the American society, which grants legal respect to the CO position, exists today because a certain number of men suffered a great deal to preserve it against totalitarian aggression. That does not make the CO's position any less worthy, but I think that it is a legitimate thing to point out.

I also feel that it is a legitimate point to make that while CO's frequently undergo family difficulties and social pressure, the present law lets them continue to enjoy home life, an intellectual life, studies, freedom of movement and companionship, the pleasures of city and society, and in some cases of career—and the pleasure of beer drinking. All of these are at least partially denied to the soldier. Neither does this invalidate the CO's stand. It merely gives him something to think about, as those of us who cooperate in a modern war have things to think about.

I have never met a CO whose courage and integrity in the face of general misunderstanding and lack of sympathy I did not admire. My remark was unfortunately phrased; it was not an expression of scandal.

WILLIAM PFAFF.

"STRANGERS TO THEIR OWN"

Frankfurt am Main, Germany

TO the Editors: Since Manfred George in his article "Strangers to Their Own" [June 5] refers to World Brotherhood and me personally, may I be permitted to comment briefly on the problem of the 3,500 colored children in Germany.

It is only too true that theirs is an unenviable fate. In a traditionally "white" country they form a distinct minority. . . . It must thus be feared that they will be the innocent victims of a combination of many prejudices prevalent in Germany just as well as in other countries. The very fact that the number of these children is so small—what are 3,500 persons in a nation of 50 million!—is an aggravation rather than an alleviation of the problem: most of these children live as isolated individuals without the moral and material protection a well organized minority such as the American Negro community can give its members. For their well-being they will have to rely exclusively on the decency of their environment. . . .

Far be it from me thus to minimize the problem. On the contrary, World Brotherhood is the only agency which has constantly and methodically called attention to it. Most of the material and literature upon which Manfred George bases his article has originated with us. It *is* a problem, and a serious one at that. There is no sense, however, in emotionalizing the issue. So far no serious cases of discrimination have

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occurred. Of course, there has been callousness and stupidity and in some instances thoughtless cruelty. On the other hand, there are examples of heart-warming kindness on the part of Germans who have adopted or otherwise cared for some of the colored *"Mischlingskinder";* and not only those are involved whom Mr. George in analogy to the American social scene calls the "German liberals."

What do I mean by "emotionalizing the issue?"

Mr. George reports the case of the Lissner family who adopted a colored boy, Donatus, although they had already four children of their own. In the article, Erich Lissner tells in the quotation marks of a direct speech that the boy "was brought to us by a married couple who had found the baby in front of their doorsteps, wrapped in newspapers and with a cardboard box for a cradle." The story of the adoption of Donatus by the Lissners is a dramatic and moving one. Its beginning, however, reported by Erich Lissner in a World Brotherhood brochure on "The Fate of Colored Children in Germany" is not quite as gruesome. The boy was born by a German refugee woman in a hospital, he became very ill and the Lissners, good Catholics, took him then and there out of pity and love. This correction is made in the name of Mr. Lissner.

As an example of bigotry Mr. George refers to Dr. Elisabeth Meyer-Spreckels of the Evangelical Women's Association in Bavaria and attributes to her "a violent anti-American speech in which she requested the German government to intercede with the United States to send over no more Negroes with occupation troops." It is depressing that this story should creep up now in the columns of The Commonweal. On July 21, and 22, 1952, the Nuremberg chapter of World Brotherhood held a conference of educators and social workers on "Colored Children and the Schools." Dr. Meyer-Spreckels was the main speaker. Dr. J. Oscar Lee of the National Council of Churches and the undersigned were present. All of the participants were astonished and shocked when an American news agency condensed the whole conference in approximately the sentence as quoted. And the alleged statement was about all the American press reported on our attempts to have the German "occupation children" integrated on the basis of undisputed equality in the German school system. . . . What really was said was: "When I was in the United States it was suggested that this problem could have been avoided if Negro troops had not been sent as occupation forces; however, I understand and I agree that all troops, Negroes included, who have fought for their country have a right to serve in occupation forces anywhere in the world." The misunderstanding arose through the fact that the American reporter present understood no German and depended upon a translator with an inadequate knowledge of English. The news agency was fair enough to issue a corrected report with an apology and the request to all papers who had printed the first story also to publish the corrected version. Dr. Meyer-Spreckels is neither anti-American nor anti-Negro nor is she a bigot. She is, on the contrary, one of those "German liberals" who fight for better understanding, cooperation and amity of religious, national and cultural groups. . . .

HERMAN EBELING,
Director, World Brotherhood, Germany

A REPLY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: With regard to the adoption of the boy Donatus by the Lissner family, I can only say that I reported the story as Mr. Lissner told it to *me*. . . .

As far as Mrs. Meyer-Spreckels is concerned, I was very glad to note Mr. Ebeling's correction, and I shall be equally glad to have you publish it. As you will have seen for yourself, the mistake was not mine. I used the wire-service material, and I had no reason to doubt its authenticity. . . .

In this connection, it might interest you to know that I just had a letter from Mr. Lissner, to whom I sent a copy of the article. He writes: "Everybody here was very happy with your article."

MANFRED GEORGE.

SENATOR McCARTHY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: With regard to the adoption of the The Commonweal, I wish to state my disagreement with your position on *Time* and McCarthy ["Of Myth and Menace," July 10]. Like Chambers and *Time* and a large number of other Americans, I am not worried about McCarthy. What worries me is that we do not have more men in public life who possess his determination and opposition to Communism, and I feel this way even though I realize that he often allows his personal feelings to lead him into unwarranted attacks on those who disagree with him. Nevertheless, his "distortions and exaggerations" do not make him a menace. He is rather, like Socrates, a fly who goads his fellow citizens out of their apathy.

His mentality is that of a lover of freedom; his methods are the use of Congressional committees and high-powered publicity, both of which are legal and good. Despite his sometimes childish truculence, he has hurt no one who did not deserve it. . . .

I can see no valid reason why you should oppose him. . . . I think you had better re-examine your own position and not let your desire to be known as liberal lead you, like the pink praters, into condemning a good, sincere, and energetic citizen.

GERARD J. DALCOURT.

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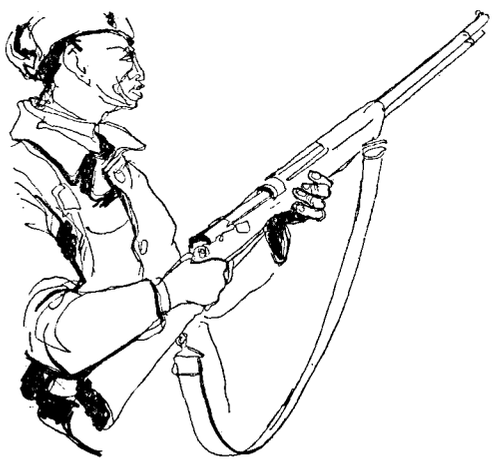
FILM FESTIVAL

Barracades In the Background

HANS SAHL

Berlin

BERLIN'S Film Festival of 1953, which opened with a gala performance of the American feature "The Bad and the Beautiful," was overshadowed by the political events of June 17th when German workers of East Berlin revolted against the Soviets. The beginning was bad as well as beautiful. Bad because the foreign guests were more profoundly moved by the tears of Frau Goettling, widow of the West Berlin worker executed by the Russians, than by the artificial tears shed on the screen. Beautiful because of the heroic events which took place only a few miles away from the reception center where autograph-hunting teenagers tried to get a glimpse of Gary Cooper, and which, for the first time since 1945, showed a whole population in open revolt against its oppressors.



Thus attention was unequally divided between Fernandel's broad smiling face and the latest news from the Potsdamer Platz. Not a few among the guests preferred talking to the timid-looking, though energetic, youth who, in the presence of firing Russian tanks, had taken down the red flag from the Brandenburg Gate, and who told his story to a group of interviewers in a casual, matter-of-fact way.

The revolt had been spontaneous, he explained. It came as soon as the Soviets loosened their grip on the population. There were street fights in the old-fashioned, romantic style of a nineteenth century barricade battle. Boys jumped on top of approaching Russian tanks in an attempt to force their way inside; others tried to thrust wooden beams into the cannon-mouths. "The Russian soldiers were afraid," he said. "If we had had weapons, we could have marched on to Moscow."

Compared to these first-hand reports from the ideological battlefront, the inauguration speeches addressed to the restless Film Festival audience by various city officials, seemed of minor interest. Yet the Festival had to go on, and the critics, though reluctantly, settled down with their typewriters to condemn the bad and to praise the beautiful. There was a striking discrepancy between the reality of those days and the reality represented by the movies. Our film makers, with their curious idea of "what the public wants," are decades behind the public's need for stories which actually reflect contemporary life.

Among the many films from all over the world, there were only a few which moved in this direction. There was, for instance, Switzerland's "They Found a Home," a tender psychological study of a group of displaced war orphans, directed by the same Leopoldt Lindtberg who gave us such unforgettable portraits of children in despair as "Marie Louise" and "The Search." And there was the American picture, "Man on the Tightrope," written by Robert Sherwood and directed by Elia Kazan, a true story out of our most recent past about the escape of a whole circus, including elephants, lions and clowns, from Czechoslovakia into the American Zone of Germany. But, strangely enough, the Berlin audience did not take to this film as warmly as one might have expected. Perhaps they were too close to it, too familiar with the real events. Perhaps it should have been directed in a more modest, more human, way, with the humble, sober eloquence of an eye-witness report. To be topical is not enough. More than a clever script and a handful of excellent actors are needed to tell the Berliners that our heart, as well as our technique, is with them.

AMONG the best movies shown at the Festival was a Japanese one, "Where the Chimneys Smoke," remarkable for its acute, penetrating probing of human relations. It is the story of poor people living in the shadow of the big factories, of small, day-to-day events in a crowded, noisy tenement house in Tokyo. Unlike "Rashomon" it is not a "great" picture, but it has the illuminating quality of genuine social comment, told in terms of visual symbols and with an almost philosophical awareness of the "casual" as a decisive force in human life.

Unfortunately, France and Italy were not as well represented as they used to be, although there was

Mr. Sahl is a correspondent for the Swiss paper, Neue Zuercher Zeitung, and is associated with the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

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much excitement about Henry-Georges Clouzot's cruel, cold-blooded, anti-trust picture "Le Salaire de La Peur," a French-Italian production, showing a group of depraved, penniless desperadoes hired by a big company to drive a truck with explosives through a Central American desert. With two of the men being blown into bits on their dangerous but profitable mission and the remaining two dying either just before or shortly after receiving their well-deserved rewards, the picture conveys the typical fellow-traveling message fashionable among French intellectuals of the very Left Bank, especially since American (monopoly) capitalism is shown as *the* evil behind all evils, the *non plus ultra* of human greed and mass exploitation. At a press conference Monsieur Clouzot denied any anti-American intentions, saying he had been influenced, rather, by existentialism —a remark which made everybody very happy, especially in view of the fact that "Le Salaire de la Peur" was to become the "people's choice" at the final voting.

As for myself, I preferred the quiet, noble dignity of the British movie version of Dickens' "Pickwick Papers," admirably directed by Noel Langley, with James Hayter in the leading part. This film, endowed with the Anglo-Saxon love of justice and reconciliation, was, in spite of its nineteenth century setting, one of the most timely contributions to the festival. Although Dickens' work was not transferred to the screen intact, this movie should remain a wonderfully moving lesson in human kindness and understanding.

This is by no means a complete report on what was going on during the 1953 Berlin Film Festival. There was an outstanding documentary on an Italian expedition to Brazil, called "Green Magic"; there was a new and charming Fernandel film, "Le Fruit Défendu"; and there were others which deserved serious attention. But I must admit that, during those days of the revolt, I neglected my duties as a critic in favor of my obligations as a contemporary.

ONCE upon a time, the art of the movies had changed the course of my generation. It was the time of Eisenstein's "Potemkin" and Pudovkin's "Mother," a time in which great social events of historical significance had found an adequate medium of expression and the Russian revolution was still an exciting spiritual adventure, worth being included in our discussions about the future of mankind. Today, with bare-handed German workers fighting Russian tanks in the streets of Berlin, the tables have been turned. We are still waiting for the "Potemkin" of today, for the great movie to come which would tell the story of a betrayed generation, of broken promises and lost illusions, of hopes for justice turned into terror and oppression, and of great human ideas which became weapons in the hands of those who wanted to destroy them. Such a picture has not been produced yet!

And when I look back on those ten days in Berlin, I do not remember a single movie having impressed me as profoundly as did that somber, unrehearsed scene in front of the Schoenberg City Hall where, in the presence of Chancellor Adenauer and Mayor Ernst Reuter, the coffins of the eight victims of dialectic materialism were saluted by a silent, mourning crowd.

BOOKS

The Giants of the Irish Revival

THREE GREAT IRISHMEN: SHAW, YEATS, JOYCE. By Arland Ussher. Devin-Adair. $3.

By WALTER KERR

WHAT Arland Ussher really deserves is a review written in what his publishers call his 'peculiar' method of dissection and what he himself describes as "the continually shifting viewpoint." Authors have been known to read reviews of their books; and it gives me intense pleasure to imagine Mr. Ussher burrowing frantically through a series of airy and erudite improvisations in a vain effort to discover whether or not the reviewer has read his book, let alone whether or not he has liked it. I'd like to shift a point of view on Mr. Ussher, just for once.

Not that there isn't gold to be panned from the mill-race of Mr. Ussher's prose. In distinguishing his three great Irishmen from one another, he points out that "Joyce is neither a forward-gazer like Shaw nor a tomb-haunter like Yeats; the world which Yeats longs to escape from and Shaw to set to rights, this cosmic scavenger accepts with an almost canine receptivity for all its sounds and smells." His strictures on the later Joyce are well taken, too: "Puns have been used as hoops to hold truths together, but Joyce uses the pun rather as a wedge to drive them apart. . . . By his splitting of every hair that divides false and true, fair and foul, he would seem to have burst that cerebral atom, the *concept*—the very rock on which any mental order must be built." And his finger is firmly planted on the sorest of Yeats' sore spots: "In the Yeatsian temple the priesthood really shuts out the laity."

The book also contains, I think, a certain amount of undefended nonsense: because the aging Shaw came to have kind words for Mussolini and Stalin, Mr. Ussher professes to see in the youthful Blunstchli a "prefigurement of the modern military dictator." With a little thought, you can discover what the

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essayist is getting at; but this does seem to me the kind of hindsight which perverts the actual spirit of a given play. The author's general esthetic, when he pauses to define it, is fairly primitive for so widely read a man:

"What is this invisible—so-called 'supernatural'—world, of which every man of imagination experiences 'intimations'? If I may give a very brief and, some will think, very insufficient answer to this immense question, it is—I personally believe—nothing other than the sleep-world of the Unconscious: that sea which has encompassed man from its beginnings, but of which he has only in our day become aware—through the discovery of the limits of his conscious 'daylight' Self."

Mr. Ussher is incontestably literate. His syntax, however, is of the sort which demands as many as six dash constructions and five parentheses to the paragraph. (And sometimes—in fact, rather frequently—supplementary dash constructions within the parentheses.) Add to this a liberal capitalization and a passion for putting reasonably familiar words in "quotes" and you have a page that bears a remarkable resemblance to a Dundee-cake. Neither does Mr. Ussher mind a word like "Aristophaneanly." I have worked on that word for some time now; it can both be read and pronounced; and it really isn't worth it.

But these are not the things which really bother me. I am, I know, old-fashioned in my tastes. I can read a rambling critical essay which means to evoke something of the spirit of a work with modest charm. I can read—or so I have always thought—a logical dissection which proceeds toward an arguable point. But a work which is too serious to be charming, and yet not serious enough to be logical, leaves me in a slightly schizoid state.

Mr. Ussher explains that his " 'ambivalent' approach should need no apology in the age of psychoanalysis and relativity," and I imagine that it is a conscientious attempt to create a critical method which will parallel the existential complexity—the flux, shall we say? —of the work under discussion. I am not sure, however, that you can tail the creative process so closely without arriving back at the creative object itself; in which case criticism loses its identity. Here the timeless meshing of pleasure and profit results in something that might be called 'plofit'—that is not Mr. Ussher's word; I thought of it first—and I find it edible but indigestible.

Social Comment

TORMENT. By Perez Galdos. Translated from the Spanish by J. M. Cohen. Farrar, Straus, and Young. $3.50.

By ROBERT H. BOYLE

A number of European critics have tended to regard Pérez Galdós as the Hispanic disciple of Balzac, and since Galdós frequently dipped his bitter pen into much the same pot of petty bourgeois inspira-

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tion, their contention has not lacked a certain glib validity. But like most literary generalities of this sort, it can not bear careful examination.

In reading *Torment,* one begins to wonder if Galdós does not have closer affinities in conception of character with the Victorians, particularly Trollope, than with Balzac. But perhaps what best asserts Galdós' claim to individuality—as compared with his late nineteenth and early twentieth century contemporaries—is his sense of form, a characteristic unknown for the most part either in Balzac or Trollope, but no doubt a logical consequence of his Spanish inheritance.

Torment is a tidy novel, by turns satirical and touching, concerned with the love between Amparo, a weak but well intentioned girl, and Caballero, a wealthy colonial who has returned to Madrid to ease his loneliness by marriage. Unfortunately Amparo has had the ill luck to have been seduced by Don Pedro, a dissolute priest, and although her fiancé has evidenced only the most human sympathies and indulgent understanding, she cannot bring herself to reveal the hated past.

It remains for the renegade Don Pedro to fix Amparo's plight as well as his own. Racked between his desire for her and his priestly vow of celibacy (as is Amparo by the past and the truth), he calls her "Torment." Shortly before the marriage, Caballero learns of her connection with the priest, and she attempts to poison herself as the sole relief to his shocked rejection. Revived and, in the best 1860 tradition, forgiven, Caballero carries Amparo off to France, not as his wife but as his mistress. Madrid society is outraged at their behavior.

With the exception of the puzzling reversal in Caballero's moral outlook, the characters are exceedingly convincing and consistent. At times they are highly amusing: "Don Francisco was as firmly anchored on the pay roll as an oyster lying on the deepest shoal out of reach of the fisherman." Galdós never slackens the pace, and the pleasing style is apparent even in translation.

But despite these attributes, *Torment* fails to fulfill more than its just share of promise. Galdós is an excellent example of what happens to a talented novelist who allows his political (for want of a better word) considerations to limit his artistic vision. There are genuine hints of tragedy in the conflicts of and between Amparo and Don Pedro, but Galdós persists in his pursuit of the ironically shallow. In Don Pedro one has the stunted shadow of Greene's "whisky priest," but Galdós—true to his anti-clericalism—overlooks the soul for the social.

Civil Liberties IV

"It takes a while, and then one day the American kid starts to get the idea. For some it comes sooner than for others, and there is a small group who never seem to get the idea, even after they are grown up and going to the polls. But for the great majority the idea of political freedom and civil liberty eventually takes root. . . .

The American idea is a big one. Like all ideas—like Christianity itself—it often seems to be shrivelled by small men more interested in using it than living by it. It has sometimes been incredibly cheapened by bargain-rate patriots' equating it with their bank-rolls or their petty hatreds. It has been weakened by sudsy sentimentalists and caricatured by sloganeers. The idea is forever taking a beating here where it is most highly honored and is perpetually threatened from abroad. But while it is kept alive, as long as even a few are holding on to it, things could be worse. Because it is the idea, more than the spacious skies, the amber waves or the fruited plains, that makes us what we are. . . ."

Editorial
in The Commonweal
November 3, 1950

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Allegories

A WOMAN AS GREAT AS THE WORLD. By Jacquetta Hawkes. Random House. $2.75.

By ANNE FREMANTLE

THE author of this collection of fables is one of England's most distinguished younger women. A cousin of the poet Gerard Manley

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Hopkins, she read anthropology and archaeology at Cambridge and has worked in the War Cabinet Offices, the Ministry of Education, and at UNESCO. She has also produced, jointly with her husband, Christopher Hawkes, who is professor of archaeology at Oxford, a book on *Prehistoric Britain,* another on *Early Britain,* and, on her own, has written a volume of verse and an admirably poetic chronicle of her country, *A Land.* She has also found time to write on the *Archaeology of Jersey* and *A Guide to the Prehistoric Monuments of England and Wales.*

All of which, alas, is no excuse for these simple, sad, pontifical allegories, which obviously seek to vie with Tolstoi, but are actually stiffly Victorian, and stem from Mrs. Scott Gatty's *Parables from Nature,* or even recall some of Julia Horatia Ewing's or Charles Kingsley's less successful tales. There is a curiously patronizing quality about, for example, "The Garden Seat" bought one year, swamped the next by a "tremendous crop of alyssum seedling." The alyssum "had taken root beneath it and thrust up through the slats" so that "at the present time the seat has almost disappeared, but everyone still has to make a detour to get round the place where it was." "Export and Die," is a glaringly obvious account of the penguin colony that is as flat on its—or should it be their? —webbed feet as Anatole France was once delicate.

The really unforgivable thing is that all these fables are admirably written. Nothing in English is as perfect as the English essay, and these essays of Mrs. Hawkes are as superbly polished as well-butlered silver. But the effect of wasting such admirable writing on such embarassingly shallow points and such picayune morals is lamentable; it is as though some great jeweler had spent his talent designing, and his gold in setting, fake stones and costume jewelry.

The Menace of the Herd is one recurrent theme here; the other is Vanity of Vanities. In "Death and the Standard of Living" a young girl, seduced by a clever young schoolmaster, finds, when he leaves her, that only her work can distract her, and "the accumulation of material goods becomes her obsession." She started courageously along this path, and soon was as unable to retreat from it "as the dinosaurs from theirs a hundred million years ago." At the end of her life, fat, and hung with beads, cameos, brooches, buckles, bangles, earrings, clips and watches, she returns to the village of her youth, and crossing a stile, meets the girl she once was. She falls over and through her, into her open grave. "The Couple Who Lived and the Couple Who Died" has the same chewing-on-mothballs conclusion.

The title story, of earth wooed by the wind, quarreling with her lover after producing the race of mortals, and rolling over and over to rid herself of the tiresome moppets he has engendered, is overly explicit, as, indeed, are all the tales. Compared with Aesop or La Fontaine, or even with such modern allegorists as Rimbaud or Kafka, they are precious and pedantic; they stick

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out like Burma Shave ads beside Chinese caligraphy. For the best butter, alas, as the Mad Hatter discovered, cannot make a watch go; nor the most perfected prose a story.

Yet the fact that the galled reader thinks in terms of such comparison as Tolstoi, Aesop, La Fontaine, Rimbaud and Kafka is obvious indication that Mrs. Hawkes is a serious writer. Perhaps there's the rub: if she would take this semi-playful, semi-pompous incursion sideways into ethics, via aesthetics, less seriously, and return to the deeps of her well-nourished, rooted, historical studies, we could give her again the more serious attention her best writing clearly deserves.

Suspense

THE SCHIRMER INHERITANCE. By Eric Ambler. Knopf. $3.

By SEYMOUR KRIM

LIKE his last novel, *Judgment on Deltchev* (1952), Eric Ambler's newest is not the top-drawer product that his admirers might have hoped for. In plain language—and with the chance that we are wrong—Mr. Ambler seems to have lost the touch that made such thrillers as *Cause for Alarm* and *Journey Into Fear* the very best of their kind. And this is sad news: like a good man, a good thriller writer is hard to find.

Now that Graham Greene has gone fancy for good, and Dashiell Hammett appears to have given up the pen, Ambler was in a sense the last of the master craftsmen who dealt in suspense and foul deeds. Who can forget the particular kind of devilish what's-going-to-happen-now? which Ambler produced with his deceptive straightforwardness? Is there one of his veteran readers who had the high moral courage to put an Ambler book down once he had picked it up—without reaching the last page, I mean? (As an old Ambler-addict let me say I envy such a man his cool blood; and feel fortunate that it is not in my veins.)

But all that, as the poet said, was in another country and the wench seems pretty dead. The country was Europe before the war—Ambler's perfect hunting-ground for brilliant tales of intrigue. The wench was the special kind of pre-war anxiety that lent undercurrents of Evil to every seemingly innocent situation that Ambler dangled before the reader.

Europe has changed now, and a new definition of what is wicked is needed. Ambler, apparently urged by his publishers to try and duplicate his earlier successes, is not quite in tune with the new era. He is still the meticulous artificer of the old, and where once his work had the excitement of an "inside story" from a foreign capital it now seems rather beside the point.

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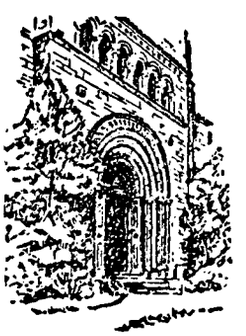

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finally finds his quarry there is a double-twist that is as unexpected as anything in the old Ambler.

The difference between this odyssey of adventure and the English author's earlier ones is that a good deal of the *en route* business is tedious and actually padded—Ambler is marking time to carry his reader through two hundred odd pages. It is as if the author himself was a little tired of his own kind of thriller, no longer inspired, no longer savoring his own cleverness in the medium, and the result shows as it always does. This isn't to imply that isolated chapters aren't as good and exact—in characterization, detail and so forth—as anything being written by Ambler's colleagues today. They are. But in overall unity and total impact this is a bad falling-off from the high standard of his earlier books. The final and sad impression is that he has passed the crest as one of the truly first-rate thriller writers of his generation.

REVIEWERS

Walter Kerr is drama critic for the New York *Herald Tribune*.

Robert H. Boyle, a free-lance critic, has recently returned from Spain.

Seymour Krim contributes frequently to *Commentary*, The Commonweal, and other publications.

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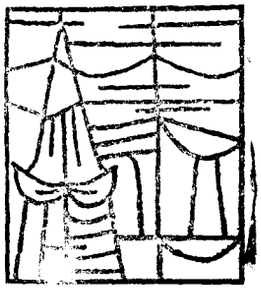

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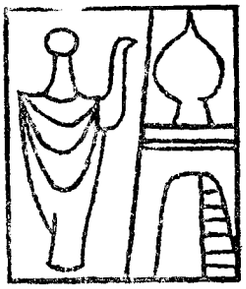

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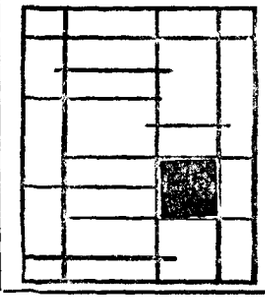

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